

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

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The present invention comprises a method and apparatus for manipulating screen objects utilizing multiband regions of influence. Positioning a reference point of an object within a particular band invokes a particular functionality or operation related to that band. In one embodiment, three types of functionality are provided. Moving a reference datum (for example, a line representing an edge or a user defined reference point) of an object A into a first band of an object B places object A under the influence of object B's gravity, causing object A to be pulled into precise alignment with object B. Moving the reference point of object A from the first band into a second band turns off object B's gravity, allowing object A to be freely moved to any arbitrary position near the object B. Moving the reference point of the object A to a position outside all bands causes object B's gravity function to be turned back on. In other embodiments, the bands of the invention provide other kinds of functionalities or operations. For example, one embodiment comprises bands that provide different types of precise positioning. In one embodiment, multiple bands are provided, each one causing objects to be positioned so as to be spaced apart by one of several precise, predetermined distances.

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